



ERUDITE PROJECTS
Demanding Excellence

Outcome Module Code: 244469

MODULE 1

Session 1

ECD Practitioner and Center Principles

Session Outcomes:

- **This session identifies the basic theoretical needs of an ECD center and practitioner**

Introduction:

Children who receive quality early childhood services gain benefits such as “Higher intelligence scores, higher and timelier school enrollment, less grade repetition and lower dropout rates, higher school completion rates, improved nutrition and health status, improved social and emotional behavior, improved parent-child relationships, and increased earning potential and economic self-sufficiency as an adult ” (World Bank, 2011).

Evidence-based early childhood development standards help us to plan as well as measure the quality of our service to young children. They also enable us to prepare and maintain competent early childhood practitioners.

Although standards are described by segments, they are interrelated and influence each other, and thus should be delivered holistically. This means young children will have better health and development outcomes when supports and services to young children include all standards

(e.g., responsive care, health and nutrition, stimulating early childhood development and learning intervention, family and community support, child protection).

Below are standards for quality early childhood care, development, and protection.

1. Relationships of children with adults and peers:

The focus is on developing responsive and positive child/caregiver relationships, including relationships between children and between adults. Adults who support young children need to nurture and have warm, respectful relationships with children. This in turn will help children develop trust and become confident and successful in their social interactions with peers and adults.

An early childhood program should consider:

- Promoting attachment for all children with at least one adult, especially during the first three years of life (e.g., including children with disabilities, vulnerable children, orphans) that allows each child to have a secure, safe, stable, and consistent caregiving experience.
- Promoting family-based caregiving practice (e.g., feeding, bathing, changing, playing, etc.) that encourages different kinds of sensory stimulations (touch, smell, hear, taste, sight) for children to explore and learn. Providing a supportive environment for all children to play, make friends, and express their feelings freely without fear.

2. Health, nutrition, and safety:

The focus is on meeting the needs of children and families in areas of health, nutrition, and safety. Families and community members have access to service and information that can help them take care of children's wellbeing (e.g., preventing childhood illnesses and injuries and promoting maternal and child health care, including breastfeeding, supplementary feeding, and maternal nutrition).

An early childhood program should consider:

- Establishing an environment that ensures the prevention and treatment of childhood illnesses and injuries through safety measures (e.g., immunization, having safe drinking water, uncontaminated food, health care).
- Promoting nutritious food and its importance at the various stages of child development for young children, with focus on areas of breastfeeding, maternal nutrition, and supplementary nutrition.

- Providing nutrition information and guidance to caregivers and families for promoting appropriate caregiver practice in child health care and nutritional needs.
- Promoting practices such as homestead gardening, livestock keeping, and nutrition programs at school for vulnerable children and families.
- Promoting health care and nutritional support for children and their families.

3. Early childhood curriculum:

The focus is on a curriculum that positively impacts children in all areas of their personal, developmental, and social needs. The curriculum enables children to grow and develop according to their interest, age, and developmental level, and ultimately achieve their full potential.

An early childhood program should consider:

- Having a curriculum that supports children's wellbeing in health, nutrition, safety, and all areas of their development (e.g., the cognitive-language, social-emotional, spiritual-moral, and physical-motor).
- Having a curriculum responsive to the values, beliefs, experiences, and language of caregivers and families.
- Having a curriculum that ensures an inclusive and developmentally and culturally appropriate learning environment for all young children. The curriculum has a plan that supports children's needs for indoor and outdoor play, creativity, exploration, physical movement, sensory manipulation of objects, and social and individual activities.
- Having a curriculum that considers the ages and developmental stages of children to plan learning and development activities for the child.

4. Training of early childhood caregivers/teachers:

The focus is on equipping early childhood caregivers and teachers with child development knowledge, skills, and dispositions helpful for young children. People who work with young children need to be well-trained in early childhood care and development and provide support appropriate to each child's individual abilities, interests, age, family values, and culture.

An early childhood program should consider::

- Having an early childhood caregiver or educator who makes children feel respected, valued, and loved, and understands positive relationships as the foundation of his/her support to young children and their families.
- Having an early childhood caregiver or educator who has knowledge of child growth and development and is able to put his/her knowledge into practice that supports the development of the whole child.
- Having an early childhood caregiver or educator who uses observations and documentation to positively influence the development and learning of all young children.
- Having an early childhood caregiver or educator who works in partnership with families to promote the wellbeing of children.
- Having an early childhood caregiver or educator who advocates for the safety and wellbeing of children.

5. Relationship with families:

The focus is on ensuring positive relationships with families. A quality early childhood program respects, supports, and makes collaborative decisions with the families of young children in all activities that concern their children. A true partnership with families guarantees long-lasting solutions for children.

An early childhood program should consider:

- Providing a service that is welcoming to all caregivers and families in an inviting and encouraging setting for family participation.

- Having regular contact with caregivers and communicating with them about their children's progress through home visits, parent meetings, and sharing child records. The dialogue with families must also consider families' concerns, values, and child-rearing traditions.
- Reaching out to families and children at different platforms (e.g., homes, parishes, health or learning centers) and encouraging their involvement in the welfare of their children (e.g., family playtime, school volunteers, child support groups, daycare assistants, social event volunteers, cultural and traditional events)
- Promoting opportunities for families by providing information about local services supportive of families' work, education, health, and spiritual growth.

6. Assessing young children:

The focus is on regularly observing and recording children's status (formally or informally) and using the data to make decisions that yield positive outcomes for children and their families. Assessment needs to be about what the child can do within his/her abilities, family values, and culture.

7. An early childhood program should consider:

- Instituting criteria for a regular evaluation of the day-to-day function of the program and its impact on children, their families, and communities at large.
- Meeting the national standards for quality early childhood services for young children.
- Having an assessment plan and procedures that ensure:
 - Regularly observing and assessing young children's development and learning status, and which considers the child's overall context (e.g., abilities, interests, home and school life).
 - Using assessment records for sound interventions at different levels of the child's life (e.g., individual, family, and community).

- Including all domains of children's development in the assessment with a focus on documenting what children can do and planning the next steps for the child and the family.
- Families participate in data collection, including children's self-evaluation.
- Familiarity of the child with both the assessment environment and the person conducting the assessment.
- Receipt of primary caregivers' informed consent to participate in assessment

Note: *It is important that families are made aware that services for their child are not contingent on participation in assessments.*

8. Early childhood environments:

The focus is on an environment that is physically and psychologically safe for children. A safe, healthy, and stimulating environment enables children to explore, play, and practice life skills free from any kind of physical and/or mental harm.

An early childhood program should consider:

- Providing physical space free from hazards, including unsafe equipment, pollution, and violence.
- Providing services that promote basic sanitation (personal hygiene, including hand washing), safe and nutritious food, potable water, adequate ventilation, and good health practices.

Providing a developmentally stimulating environment for all children with opportunity for:

- Caregiver/child ratio sufficiently low to promote positive child-to-child and child-to-caregiver/teacher interactions.

- Adequate indoor and outdoor space for movement and age-appropriate learning, and play materials for active individual and social activities.
- Free-play and structured activities to promote developmental and learning skills for children with different abilities.
- Using materials from the child's local environment, including natural materials.
- Having in place a policy on code of conduct and child protection that meets national standards and is signed by and accessible to all staff and caregivers.
- Providing an inclusive environment that welcomes families and is suitable for children who have special physical, developmental, and learning needs.

9. Management and administration:

The focus is on promoting high quality child care and development services. Quality improves when programs better understand child development and basic (e.g., national) standards for quality early childhood services. Programs need to also maintain well-trained caregivers and staff that strive for holistic support to children and families.

An early childhood program should consider:

- Having in place early childhood materials that reflect the national policies and standards for quality childcare.
- Having a system for the continuous support and
- Engaging families and communities and using information from parents and community members to inform its early childhood development services.
- Having information and referral procedures in place to access community services for young children.

- Having a system and tools in place to monitor and evaluate the quality and impact of the services provided to young children and their families, and adjusting methods accordingly.
- Having a system and tools in place to ensure financial sources and human resource development (e.g., skill-building of early childhood care service providers, training, mentoring, professional development of teachers/caretakers/ volunteers) to sustain the program's service long term.

10. Services for young children with disabilities:

The focus is on recognizing that children with disabilities have the same rights as other children without disabilities, i.e., they have the right to *“fully enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with other children...including the right to express their views freely on matters affecting them, their views being given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity, on an equal basis with other children...and to be provided with disability and age-appropriate assistance to realize that right”* (Article 7, United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities).

An early childhood program should consider:

- Promoting a positive attitude among communities regarding children with disabilities.
- Establishing a support team of caregivers of children with disabilities, program staff, and other child care providers (e.g., health and/or rehabilitation clinic, school) for:
 - Promoting family and community-based care for children with disabilities (e.g., giving priority for family-based care as opposed to institutional care).
 - Quickly identifying developmental delays and/or disabilities and ensuring appropriate early intervention for children with disabilities.
 - Ensuring referrals and linkages between services in the community.
 - Promoting inclusive services for children with disabilities at various platforms (e.g., ECD centers/schools, health clinics, child wellbeing and protection services).

- Advocating for children with disabilities and their families to have equal access and equal opportunities in types and levels of support and services irrespective of their gender, religion, ethnicity, language, or culture.

Child protection:

The focus is on ensuring that all children are protected from all forms of abuse and exploitation. This includes sexual abuse, child labor, physical and mental abuse, and child trafficking. All children also have the right to participate in all activities without being humiliated or degraded.

An early childhood program should consider:

- Ensuring that child protection procedures per national guidelines are in place and routinely monitored.
- Identifying risks in a child's environment (e.g., home, school) that could present opportunities for abuse, or where safeguards are likely to be insufficient to protect children from harm such as sexual abuse, hazardous work, or physical, emotional, and psychological abuse.
- Reporting any concern or suspicion of child abuse or exploitation to appropriate community authorities.
- Promoting assistance to victims of abuse as appropriate to the child's age and developmental level.
- Having caregivers/teachers that respect the dignity of children and maintain the highest standards of personal and professional conduct when dealing with young children (e.g., abiding by national code of ethics in early childhood development).
- Ensuring both girls and boys have equal access and equity in types and levels of health, nutrition, security, education, and legal services (e.g., inheritance, birth registration, social welfare).

- Ensuring that children from low-income groups have access and equity similar to that of children from high-income groups.
- Ensuring that children participate in all activities that are appropriate to their age and that their voices are heard without being judged or ridiculed.



Assignment 1: Interview and Observation

You will be observing a practitioner or center. The observations will make form a report that you submit.

How do you complete this ?

1. Pick 3 focus areas discussed above.
2. Observe / have a discussion with a practitioner in the ECD field.
3. Discuss how the center / Practitioner creates the environment aimed for in each of the discussions.
4. Ask questions that allow the practitioner to give you more information regarding how his/her center works.
5. Record the findings for each focus area (500 words maximum per area)
6. Pictures can also be taken.
7. Enter your observations on the following link

<https://goo.gl/forms/Cqu6LSx7BVtfR2012>

Remember:

- No answers from accounts outstanding will be accepted.
- You can also share your answers on the closed Facebook and Whatsapp groups.
- This can also be submitted in a physical copy on the days of your practical.



Preparing for Module 1 - Session 2:

In preparation for the next session, please consider the following:

1. How would you describe the development of children ?
2. Read up on the theories of childhood development ?
3. What made you feel safe as a child ?
4. How would you change the way you were raised ?

These can be discussed on the Facebook group as well.

We look forward to your progress.